

# MALALAS, *THE SECRET HISTORY*, AND JUSTINIAN'S PROPAGANDA

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**T**he hostile description of the Emperor Justinian I in Procopius' *Secret History* is well known.<sup>1</sup> The bland but generally favorable account of the same Emperor in the eighteenth and final book of Malalas' *Chronographia* has received rather less attention.<sup>2</sup> There Malalas gives us a jumbled mass of information with no apparent attempt at imposing any kind of order, other than chronological, on the material. We are told of the Emperor acting as sponsor at the baptism of barbarian kings, providing largesse for cities struck by earthquake, and conducting occasional persecutions of pagans, heretics, homosexuals, and astrologers, not to mention citizens who rioted at the horse races. Malalas also gives us rather brief and generally uninformative accounts of the Emperor's campaigns against Persians, Saracens, Huns, Vandals, and others.<sup>3</sup> In short, it is a jumbled but favorable account of the

sorts of things that any decent emperor should be doing.

The object of this paper is to suggest first that much of Malalas' information about Justinian is derived from the Emperor's own propaganda (though the chronicle itself is not propaganda) and that Procopius' abuse represents the opposing version, though we cannot tell which side initiated the propaganda and which responded to it. The starting point for this discussion is the frequency with which Malalas and the *Secret History* refer to the same or similar events for which they give opposing interpretations. That is, Malalas' odd jumble of information corresponds with the very topics which Procopius uses in his attempt to demonstrate Justinian's wickedness,<sup>4</sup> for it is on these matters that the Emperor's reputation will have rested, a matter which is itself noteworthy.

The correspondence in subject matter is not in itself enough to demonstrate that there was interplay between the two writers (or their sources), though it is enough to allow the suggestion. The suggestion, however, can be strengthened by looking at other passages in Malalas' chronicle and the operation elsewhere in the Byzantine tradition of similar imperial propaganda and counter-propaganda. I attempt here to do this and then to examine some aspects of this propaganda, the social conflict behind it, and the implications of this for the literary history of Justinian's reign and for the later social fusion, which, as has recently been suggested, took place under Justinian's successor, Justin II.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For convenience, references are given by chapter and sentence, the system used in both the main edition, *Procopii Caesariensis Opera Omnia* III, eds. J. Haury-G. Wirth (Teubner, Leipzig, 1963), *Historia Arcana*, and in the translations which I have taken from H. B. Dewing, *Procopius*, VI (Loeb, London and Cambridge, Mass., 1935), *The Secret History*. On the nature of Procopius' criticism, B. Rubin, "Zur Kaiserkritik Ostrogoths," *Studi Bizantini e Neellenici (Atti del VIII congresso internazionale di Studi Bizantini)*, Palermo, 1951, 7 (1953), 453–62; *idem*, "Der Fürst der Dämonen," *BZ*, 44 (1951), 469–81; *idem*, *Prokopios von Kaisareia* (Stuttgart, 1954), rpr. in *RE*, 23.1 (1957), cols. 527–72; *idem*, *Das Zeitalter Justinians* (Berlin, 1960), 197–226, 440–73; F. H. Tinnfeld, *Kategorien der Kaiserkritik in der byzantinischen Historiographie* (Munich, 1971), 29–36.

<sup>2</sup>Malalas, *Chronographia*, ed. L. Dindorf (Bonn ed., 1831). The translations are drafts from the Australian Malalas project. Book 18 occupies 72 of the 496 pages of the Bonn edition.

<sup>3</sup>Sponsor at baptism, Malalas, *op. cit.*, 427, 431, cf. 434; largesse, 428, 431, 436, 440–41, 443, 448, 450, 452, 456, 458, 467, 478; pagans, 449; heretics, 428, 468, 471; homosexuals, 436; astrologers, cf. note 22 *infra*; chariot race riots, 473–77, 483–84, 488, 490–91. Persians, 427, 441–42, 453, 460–72, 480; Saracens, 434, 445; Huns, 431–32, 437–38, 450, 472; Vandals, 459–60; Goths, 480, 483, 485; Avars, 490; Slavs, 490; Moors, 496; Samaritans, 447.

<sup>4</sup>*Secret History*, xix, 11–12, has a brief summary of these topics.

<sup>5</sup>A. M. Cameron, "Images of Authority: Elites and Icons in Late Sixth-Century Byzantium," *Past and Present*, 84 (1980), 3–35, rpr. in her *Continuity and Change in Sixth-Century Byzantium*

Procopius' attack falls easily into the tradition of emperor-criticism. That Malalas' bland statements, on the other hand, could be based on imperial propaganda is less obvious. I have argued elsewhere<sup>6</sup> that much of Malalas' source material for contemporary events consisted of official imperial notices, and thus he reveals not so much the common man's view of the Emperor, as is generally assumed,<sup>7</sup> but rather the official interpretation of events presented by the court. It can be shown that various emperors of the fifth to seventh centuries did indeed publish brief official versions of some events; that their official notices were distributed widely among the cities of the Empire and sometimes placed on church and city notice boards; and that chroniclers did indeed use these official notices for their accounts of contemporary events, at least on some occasions.<sup>8</sup> I have also argued elsewhere that it is a characteristic of Byzantine historical writing to give an appearance of bland, straightforward reporting while in fact being highly apologetic or partisan.<sup>9</sup> Alexander Kazhdan, though discussing a later period, has recently shown how Byzantine emperor-criticism takes a particular piece of information and subtly distorts it. "The Byzantines were capable of understanding the political implications of [imperial] propaganda, although concealed usually between very vague expressions and images. They were capable as well of counter-propaganda, of the re-interpretation of imperial symbols and words, of imposing over them a perverse meaning."<sup>10</sup>

(London, 1981), XVIII, and in M. E. Mullett and R. D. Scott, eds., *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, University of Birmingham Thirteenth Spring Symposium of Byzantine Studies, 1979 (Birmingham, 1981), 205–34.

<sup>6</sup>R. D. Scott, "Malalas and Justinian's Codification," *Byzantine Papers*, ed. Elizabeth and Michael Jeffreys and Ann Moffatt (Canberra, 1981), 12–31. There I argued (pp. 14–17) that the very bland language used in the legal passages was, because of its formulaic character, derived from official notices. The most obvious case comes from the *Chronicon Paschale*, I, ed. L. Dindorf (Bonn, 1832), 630–34, where the bland formulaic preface introduces the text of *CI*, I.1.6, which is based on a more reliable copy of the text than the one made available to Tribonian and his fellow law commissioners.

<sup>7</sup>K. Krumbacher, *Geschichte der byzantinischen Litteratur* (2nd ed., Munich, 1897), 319; G. Moravcsik, *Byzantinoturcica*, I (2nd ed., Berlin, 1958), 330; H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur der Byzantiner*, I (Byzantinisches Handbuch, Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft, XII.5.1 [Munich, 1978]), 321–24.

<sup>8</sup>Scott, *art. cit.*, 17–20. Examples include Heraclius' victory letter, Justinian's confession of faith, the text of *CI*, I.1.6 (all in Paschal Chronicle); Verina's proclamation of Leontius (Malalas); the Nika riot (Marcellinus comes).

<sup>9</sup>Scott, "The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Historiography," M. E. Mullett and R. D. Scott, eds., *op. cit.*, 61–74.

<sup>10</sup>A. P. Kazhdan, "Certain Traits of Imperial Propaganda in the Byzantine Empire from the Eighth to the Fifteenth Centu-

The devastating effect of a subtle change can be illustrated by the story of the Emperor Michael III and the poor woman, published under Michael's successor, Basil I. Here we can detect precisely how Michael's own propaganda was perverted into emperor-criticism without any alteration of fact. Since this ninth-century example provides a specific illustration of a process which we can only argue must also have taken place in the sixth century, it is worth quoting in full.

The chronicler tells the story to show Michael's abysmal depravity. Having begun with Michael and the hippodrome, he goes on: "But I will relate something even worse. It is not enough to call it improper, it is completely contrary to imperial dignity. One day Michael met a woman, whose son was his godchild, coming away from the baths with her jug in hand. Leaping off his horse and dismissing all but a few intimates in his suite, he went with her on foot. 'Don't be alarmed,' said he. 'Won't you invite me in? I would enjoy some bread and white cheese.' The poor woman was so overwhelmed by the presence of the Emperor under her roof that she was quite helpless. So it was Michael who had to lay the table (or rather the stool as she did not own a table), and for a cloth he used the damp towel. Next he asked her for the key of the cupboard, and so the Emperor was all at once the one to lay the table, to be cook and host. And when he had eaten with her he returned to the palace on foot."<sup>11</sup>

Such is the chronicler's story, and there can be no doubt that there was a body of opinion which agreed with him that the story was shocking. But, as Mrs. Karlin-Hayter shows, public opinion as a whole did not react this way. One of the variants reveals, unwittingly, that the story was originally told, as it would be today, to Michael's credit. This variant, after recounting his preparing food and then partaking of it with the poor woman, continues that this was "in imitation of Christ."<sup>12</sup> This original version was doubtless part of Michael's own propaganda, especially when one remembers that *μύησις*

ries," in G. Makdisi, D. Sourdél, and Janine Sourdél-Thomine, eds., *Prédication et Propagande au Moyen Âge: Islam, Byzance, Occident*, Penn. Paris, *Dumbarton Oaks Colloquia III, Session de 20–25 Octobre 1980* (Paris, 1983), 27.

<sup>11</sup>Pseudo-Symeon, *Annales*, 17, 660–61 (PG, 109), cols. 721C–724A. I owe both the reference and the translation to Patricia Karlin-Hayter, to whom I am also indebted for much helpful discussion.

<sup>12</sup>Theophanes Continuatus, *Chronographia*, IV, 37, 200 (PG, 109), col. 213D.

Θεοῦ, "imitation of God," was required of the emperor. The version put out by his successor Basil simply used the same story to try to discredit Michael by showing that he lacked imperial dignity.

Bearing in mind that the official notices of early Byzantine emperors were certainly used as source material by early chroniclers, and taking into account the technique of subtle distortion among later Byzantines to produce counter-propaganda, we can now note where the chronicler Malalas refers to the same or similar events as does the imperial critic Procopius.

First there are the instances where Malalas and the *Secret History* agree on the facts, while offering opposing interpretations of them. They agree on Justinian's gifts of money to barbarian leaders and his use of such people as allies.<sup>13</sup> Here Malalas stresses their conversion to Christianity, whereas Procopius protests the waste of money on such dubious friends. They agree on Justinian's great building activity, though Procopius stresses its extravagance and denies that Justinian repaired essential structures such as aqueducts.<sup>14</sup> They agree on his confiscation of senatorial property, but Malalas limits this to the Nika riots and to the example of Priskos (also used in the *Secret History*) before going on to refer to the restoration of property during Justinian's consulship of 533 (a suitable year for exploiting a royal pardon to the full).<sup>15</sup> They both record the Emperor's compassion toward his critics, though in the *Secret History* this is considered evidence of Justinian's unstable character.<sup>16</sup> They both report that citizens of low rank could now be compelled to give evidence even against their will.<sup>17</sup> To Malalas this represents Justinian's determination to establish the truth; in the *Secret History* it means, not the removal of civil liberties, but the willingness of the Emperor to rely upon dubious, low-class evidence. The attempt to save prostitutes from sin is reported as a successful measure by Malalas, as a dismal failure in the *Secret History*.<sup>18</sup> They have similar accounts of the punishment of

homosexuals,<sup>19</sup> heretics,<sup>20</sup> pagans,<sup>21</sup> and probably astrologers<sup>22</sup> and refer to the confiscation of their property. I shall return to this shortly.

Next, there are the instances where Malalas and the *Secret History* refer to the same kind of material, but disagree about the facts. In Malalas we find an example of a prisoner of war having his ransom paid by the imperial authorities.<sup>23</sup> In a *Secret History* example Justinian refuses to pay the ransom and, indeed, appropriates the ransom offered by relatives for his own use.<sup>24</sup> Malalas stresses Justinian's aid to cities affected by earthquake,<sup>25</sup> including "an act of divine generosity to the people of Antioch, Laodicea, and Seleucia, providing that their liability to taxes be remitted for three years."<sup>26</sup> The *Secret History*, which records earthquakes as part of the catastrophe of Justinian's reign, makes no mention of imperial assistance, but states that Justinian allowed no remission for those affected by the plague<sup>27</sup> and in fact reduced from seven years to one Anastasius' remission for cities that had suffered invasion.<sup>28</sup> The *Secret History* refers to the property which governors acquired by dubious means in their provinces,<sup>29</sup> whereas Malalas mentions a law prohibiting magistrates from acquiring such property.<sup>30</sup> The *Secret History* tells of Justinian's debasement of coinage, the gold nomisma; claimed by Bury as the only instance in the *Secret History* where Procopius can be convicted of making a statement which has no basis in fact.<sup>31</sup> Yet, even in this regard, we learn from Malalas that the coinage was debased in 553, but that the Emperor, because of rioting, ordered it restored to its for-

<sup>19</sup> Malalas, 436, 3–16; *Secret History*, xi, 34; xix, 11.

<sup>20</sup> Malalas, 428, 5–7; 468, 1–9; 478, 12–15. *Secret History*, xi, 15, 24; xix, 11.

<sup>21</sup> Malalas, 449, 3–11; 491, 18–20. *Secret History*, xi, 31; xix, 11.

<sup>22</sup> Reading ἀστρονομίαν for the doubtful νόμιμα at Malalas, 451.18, in line with an unedited chronicle in the Vatican (Codex Vaticanus Graecus 163, fol. 26<sup>v</sup>, lines 25–27); cf. Scott, *art. cit.*, 22. *Secret History*, xii, 6–11.

<sup>23</sup> Malalas, 438, 14–16.

<sup>24</sup> *Secret History*, xii, 6–11.

<sup>25</sup> Malalas, 436, 21–437, 2; 443, 13–15; 444, 1–4; 448, 3–5, 17–19; 485, 8–23.

<sup>26</sup> *Idem*, 444, 1–4.

<sup>27</sup> *Secret History*, xxiii, 20–21.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, xxiii, 6–7.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi, 9–14.

<sup>30</sup> Malalas, 437, 5–9.

<sup>31</sup> *Secret History*, xxii, 38; xxv, 11–12. J. B. Bury, *History of the Later Roman Empire from the death of Theodosius I to the Death of Justinian*, II (London, 1923), 427 note 1. Even here Bury admits "it may be doubted whether Procopius had not some actual temporary or local fact in mind."

<sup>13</sup> Malalas, 428, 1–4; 431, 2–5, 16–21. *Secret History*, viii, 5–6; xi, 5–10; xix, 6–10, 13–17.

<sup>14</sup> Malalas, 426, 1–5; 427, 14–17; 430, 18–19; 435, 18–436, 2; 445, 8–9; 477, 1–3; 479, 21–22; 486, 1–9; 489, 19–490, 5; 492, 3–6; 495, 9–14. *Secret History*, xxvi, 23–25.

<sup>15</sup> Malalas, 449, 12–14 (Priskos); 478, 18–21 (recall of exiles). *Secret History*, viii, 9–11; xi, 40–xii, 12; xvi, 10; xvii, 4–5; xix, 11–12; xx, 17; xxi, 5; xxvi, 16; xxvii, 25.

<sup>16</sup> Malalas, 438, 21–439, 7. *Secret History*, xiii, 1–3, 13–19.

<sup>17</sup> Malalas, 437, 15–16. *Secret History*, xi, 35.

<sup>18</sup> Malalas, 440, 14–441, 7. *Secret History*, xvii, 5–6, contrast Procopius, *Buildings*, I.9.3.

mer value.<sup>32</sup> The *Secret History* records several stories about Justinian forging wills.<sup>33</sup> Malalas relates a lovely story of the Emperor piously accepting a will, against the advice of his accountant, who pointed out that it would involve him in considerable expense.<sup>34</sup> But I shall discuss this in more detail later.

These examples are sufficient to show that for a number of Procopius' criticisms of Justinian there existed an alternative view. We cannot of course prove that the versions accepted by Malalas go back to the imperial office. But, given the existence of imperial notices and their use by chroniclers as source material, this must be the most likely origin. Whether Procopius is then distorting imperial propaganda or vice-versa cannot be established. There must also be a possibility that much else in Malalas' account of Justinian and contemporary events is derived from an official source. I wish now to look at just two issues, inheritance and the treatment of social deviants.

Unlike the material taken from official notices, the story of Eulalios would seem to be oral in origin:

In the same period a certain Eulalios, a count of the household, went from riches to poverty in the following manner. After a fire had burned down his house, he fled naked with his three daughters. Since he was in great debt, and on the point of death, he made out his will to the emperor. The will read: "Let the most pious Justinian provide for my daughters a daily allowance of 15 folles. When they are of a proper age and have come to marriage, let them each have ten pounds of gold as a dowry. Let my debts be discharged from my inheritance." Thereupon Eulalios died. The will was brought to the emperor by the curator. Justinian commanded him to take care of the will, but the curator went to the house where Eulalios had lived and made a catalogue of his property which was found to amount to 564 nomismata. So the curator went away and told the emperor his valuation of the property and the legacy bequeathed to him. Still the emperor commanded Macedonius the curator to discharge the will. And when the curator objected that the value of the legacy was insufficient to discharge the will, the emperor retorted, "Why are you preventing me from discharging the will when I piously wish to do so? Go away and pay all his debts and the legacies that he willed. I command that the three daughters be brought to the empress Theodora to be cared for in her private household and that each be given twenty pounds of gold as a dowry and the full amount that their father bequeathed them."<sup>35</sup>

<sup>32</sup> Malalas, 486, 19–22.

<sup>33</sup> *Secret History*, xii, 1–11.

<sup>34</sup> Malalas, 439, 8–440, 13.

<sup>35</sup> Malalas, 439, 8–440, 13. Prof. Fairy Von Lilienthal has pointed out to me the similarity between this story and the pop-

As I suggested above, this kind of story must be oral in origin. Again, I cannot prove it, but the narrative style is quite different from the dull, bland catalogue of the Emperor's other activities. It is lively, with a nice human touch in dialogue, and the story line is sustained—if only for a page. If it does go back to an official document, then certainly Malalas has jazzed it up pretty thoroughly. It is comparable to that other great story in Book 18 of the dog, which, among other marvelous tricks, could accurately point out pregnant women, brothel keepers, adulterers, misers, and braggarts;<sup>36</sup> this surely is based on the oral tradition. One can also point to Malalas' account of the Nika riots which reveals similar skills in story telling and which is generally assumed to be based on oral sources.<sup>37</sup>

Eulalios' story was obviously very good publicity for Justinian. That the question of inheritance was an important and lively issue in Justinian's reign can also be demonstrated. For of the 168 Justinianic novels published from 535, and so dealing with issues that had not (much to Justinian's chagrin) been settled by the Code, some twenty-two deal directly with questions of inheritance, another eight indirectly, and another eighteen deal with transfers of property among private citizens.<sup>38</sup> This is by far the most frequent issue. We should also note the frequency of Novels on the transfer of church property,<sup>39</sup> even though this is the period of Justinian's great provincial reorganization which also produces its crop of legislation.<sup>40</sup> Inheritance, too, is an issue on which Procopius criticizes Justinian frequently. Indeed, it seems to be his most frequent criticism. Procopius accuses Justinian of forging wills,<sup>41</sup> of trumping up charges so that he

ular St. Nicholas story of the three daughters. Justinian did build and dedicate a church to St. Nicholas which was much frequented (Procopius, *Buildings*, I.6.4, *op. cit.*, III.2.29). This is the earliest known St. Nicholas church and probably the earliest reference to St. Nicholas.

<sup>36</sup> Malalas, 453, 15–454, 4.

<sup>37</sup> J. B. Bury, "The Nika Riots," *JHS*, 17 (1897), 94.

<sup>38</sup> I cannot claim to have done much more than to have perused the Novels, many of which treat a variety of topics. My assignation and count is thus somewhat arbitrary. Nevertheless, I find direct references to inheritance in the following novels: 1, 2, 18, 39, 48, 53, 66, 68, 84, 89, 92, 97–98, 101, 107–8, 117–18, 127, 158–59, 164; indirect references in the following: 17 (section 12), 22, 38, 74, 119, 150, 155; and private transfers of property in: 4, 32–34, 61, 91, 100, 112, 115, 121, 135–36, 138, 156, 162, 166–68.

<sup>39</sup> Transfer of church property: Novels 7, 40, 46, 54–55, 65, 67, 120, 131.

<sup>40</sup> Provincial reorganization: Novels 3, 8, 15, 21, 23–31, 36, 50, 69, 102–4, 145.

<sup>41</sup> *Secret History*, xii, 1–11.

can grab people's property,<sup>42</sup> of changing the laws of inheritance in a way that amounts to the imposition of a hefty death duty;<sup>43</sup> and of doing all this while hypocritically claiming he was acting piously,<sup>44</sup> which of course ties in nicely with Malalas' story of Eulalios. Procopius also links this criticism to Justinian's alleged meanness, his attacks on the family, and so on.<sup>45</sup> Clearly, inheritance was a big issue and one on which Justinian must have faced widespread and frequent censure. Hence, the importance to Justinian that such stories as Eulalios' become as widespread as possible. It is certainly possible that the Eulalios story is simply a folk image of Justinian, but given its value to him and the importance of the issue, there can be little doubt that, whatever Malalas' immediate source, the story originated in the imperial office. The Emperor undoubtedly made use of oral stories, for which I suggest below (p. 107) one possible method of dissemination.

There is another group of stories for which comparison between the Malalas and Procopius versions is worth considering. These are the accounts of Justinian's varied measures against heretics, pagans, Jews, homosexuals, and astrologers.<sup>46</sup> Malalas and Procopius basically agree that Justinian did his best to stamp out all these evils. Procopius, however, interprets the measures partly as evidence of Justinian's cruelty and partly as a means to enrich himself through large-scale confiscations from those found guilty of wrongdoing. The connecting thread in this part of Procopius' account (Chapter XI) is the terror and disturbance brought by Justinian upon peaceful and settled communities. He describes Justinian as having "the one thought in mind that the earth should by many a device be filled with human blood"; so "he con-

trived another massacre of his subjects on a large scale" (XI,13). Procopius says of heretics that "no previous emperor had ever disturbed them" (XI,18); that following Justinian's measures "the whole Roman empire was filled with murder and with exiled men" (XI,23); that "indiscriminate confusion swept through Palestine" (XI,24), where "one hundred thousand perished in the struggle and the land became in consequence destitute of farmers" (XI,29); that prosecutions against sodomy were carried out recklessly (XI,35); that attacks on astrologers involved even old men and others who were respectable (XI,37); and so, in a concluding passage, "a great throng of persons were fleeing constantly, not only to the barbarians, but also to those Romans who lived at a great distance, and it was possible to see both in the country and every city great numbers of strangers. For in order to escape detection they readily exchanged their respective native lands for foreign soil, just as if their home country had been captured by an enemy" (XI,38–39).

Malalas' account of these same measures agrees with Procopius in substance, but is written in that bland, matter-of-fact style which I associate with official notices. Be that as it may, what interests me is that Malalas even agrees with Procopius that the result was fear. But the important difference is that Malalas quite obviously sees a reign of terror as proper and right. For the clearest indication of this we need to make use of Theophanes' chronicle, which, though of the ninth century, in some places preserves a more detailed version of the original Malalas than survives in our one abbreviated manuscript. At the end of the Nika riots, for instance, with its 35,000 casualties, Theophanes states that there was much fear and the city was quiet (φόβος πολὺς καὶ ἡσυχασεν ἡ πόλις).<sup>47</sup> Likewise, following Justinian's punishment of pederasts, there was both fear and security (φόβος πολὺς καὶ ἀσφάλεια).<sup>48</sup> That is, fear exists along with such blessings as peace and security; we meet the same formula in what for us is the more natural context of Justinian's victories over the Bulgars and Huns, who out of fear kept the peace, leaving the Empire secure.<sup>49</sup> So, when Malalas tells us that much fear followed the punishment of homosexuals,<sup>50</sup> and appeared again after the Palestinian riots had been ferociously

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, xxi, 15; cf. xi, 3 and xxi, 5. Note, in contrast, Novel 134.13.2 (556 A.D.) which states that the property of anyone executed cannot be confiscated but must pass to the normal heir. Given that this novel contradicts ancient laws accepted in Justinian's codification in 529 (*CI*, IX.49.1–10, especially 10 of 426 A.D.), as well as common practice through the history of the Roman Empire, one must wonder whether the novel was introduced to combat popular criticism. Presumably where the death sentence included confiscation of property this novel did not apply.

<sup>43</sup> *Secret History*, xxix, 19–21.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, xxix, 25.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, xii, *passim*.

<sup>46</sup> *Secret History* on heretics, xi, 15, 24; on pagans, xi, 31; on Jews, xxviii, 16–17; on homosexuals, xi, 34; on astrologers, xi, 37. For Malalas, see note 3 *supra*. Malalas, Book 18, contains no specific reference to measures against Jews, but the normal hostile attitude can be discerned.

<sup>47</sup> Theophanes, *Chronographia*, AM 6024, ed. C. de Boor (Leipzig, 1883), 186.1.

<sup>48</sup> *Idem*, AM 6021, *op. cit.*, 177, 17.

<sup>49</sup> *Idem*, AM 6032, *op. cit.*, 219, 12–14. Malalas, 451, 13–15.

<sup>50</sup> Malalas, 436, 15.

quashed,<sup>51</sup> he views this fear favorably. It implies that the emperor, as God's representative on earth, is doing his job properly, making his Christian world a better place for all of us. Similarly, Justinian's violent and summary punishment of wrongdoers, be they private citizens<sup>52</sup> or magistrates,<sup>53</sup> must be seen as having Malalas' full approval.

Fear was, then, acceptable in Byzantine society of the sixth century. The meaning of φόβος is admittedly complex, especially in the phrase "the fear of God."<sup>54</sup> Clement of Alexandria contrasts the Christian version (where φόβος means αἰδώς, "respect" or "reverence") to the Hebrew version where, he claims, fear is more akin to μῖσος, "hatred."<sup>55</sup> Malalas, however, seems to lean more toward the Old Testament version, stressing rather the fear of punishment, which was contrasted likewise by Maximus Confessor to the proper Christian fear of God.<sup>56</sup> That is, we have here in Malalas the suggestion of a return to Old Testament values. In later Byzantine literature also there are sporadic indications of the acceptance of fear as a good quality in society. On the other hand, this phenomenon may be most notable in Justinian's reign (though other Old Testament attitudes continued), for Theophanes contrasts the terror instilled by Chosroes to Heraclius' gentle care for his subjects,<sup>57</sup> while Averil Cameron has drawn attention to the humility of Justin II's abdication speech as something unthinkable under Justinian.<sup>58</sup>

In the matter of Justinian's reign of terror, therefore, the *Secret History* and Malalas do agree on the basic facts; their differences simply reflect their different attitudes toward it. It is Malalas who gives the plain, orthodox view of sixth-century man—the view that can be published. Procopius, on the other hand (who, we must remember, is generally accused of revealing in his *Secret History* the prejudices of the wealthy, conservative, land-owning class),<sup>59</sup> may, in fact, support a much more

liberal and less punitive society, one that even tolerated Judaism.<sup>60</sup> But his was an old-fashioned view no longer acceptable, at least at court. He can include it only in this warped and fanciful attack on Justinian (which is what the *Secret History* is), but the range and detail of his material suggest that there must have been others also who held similar views.

All these counter-interpretations of parallel situations in Malalas and the *Secret History* suggest that each author has access to one or the other side of the propaganda for or against the court. The range of issues covered is considerable, varying from the relatively trivial to matters of great importance, but their treatment is limited and superficial, as is to be expected for the kind of material that avoids any examination of what lies beneath a piece of propaganda or an abuse. The concern over inheritance perhaps at least helps identify a level of society, since it is likely to have been an issue only among the relatively affluent property owners. Procopius' concern over Justinian's persecutions may reflect, too, the old aristocracy's fear of a changing society. But just mentioning these issues does not disclose their general context.

It is worth noting here an oddity about the literary history of Justinian's reign. Most of our sources were published either late in his reign or early in the following reign of Justin II, but they deal mostly with the early period of Justinian's reign, or reveal odd gaps in their authors' careers. Thus, John Lydus' *De Magistratibus*, Book III, is specifically about his own time. We can date its publication to between 554 and 565, yet it breaks off in 532.<sup>61</sup> Agathias, whose subject matter officially begins where Procopius left off and covers 552 to 558, still manages to include a good deal of earlier material in digressions, for the length and irrelevance of which he finds it necessary to apologize.<sup>62</sup> Further, the Camerons have demonstrated that Agathias' *Cycle*

<sup>51</sup> *Idem*, 488, 2.

<sup>52</sup> *Idem*, 451, 19–21; 468, 8–9; 488, 9–12.

<sup>53</sup> *Idem*, 447, 13–19.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. G. W. H. Lampe, ed., *A Patristic Greek Lexicon* (Oxford, 1961–68), s.v. φόβος, whence the following examples are taken.

<sup>55</sup> Clement of Alexandria, *Paedagogus*, I.9.87.1, ed. O. Stählin (GCS, 1936), 140.29–141.6.

<sup>56</sup> Maximus Confessor, *Capitulum de caritate quattuor centuriae*, I.81, PG, 90, col. 960.

<sup>57</sup> Theophanes, most notably at AM 6114, *op. cit.*, 306–8, where even the phrase "the fear of God" (*op. cit.*, 307, 3) again means "respect for God" rather than "terror caused by God."

<sup>58</sup> A. M. Cameron, "An Emperor's Abdication," *Byzantinoslavica*, 37 (1976), 161–67.

<sup>59</sup> Rubin, "Zur Kaiserkritik Ostroms," 454; *idem*, *Procopios von Kaisareia*, 301–4; Tinnefeld, *op. cit.*, 21–22.

<sup>60</sup> At any rate the *Secret History* does object to Justinian's unfair treatment of Jews (xxviii, 16–19). Toleration of Judaism, with sporadic exceptions, as a religion vouchsafed by its antiquity, was a characteristic of Roman paganism, which in theory, though not in practice, survived even Constantine's establishment of Christianity. See E. M. Smallwood, *The Jews under Roman Rule* (Leiden, 1976), 544. The Christian Byzantine attitude toward Judaism was consistently intolerant. For Justinian's position, see Novel 146 together with the codification of previous emperors' decrees at *CI*, I.9–10.

<sup>61</sup> R. Wünsch (ed.), *Ioannis Lydi de Magistratibus Populi Romani* (Leipzig, 1903), Praefatio, vi–vii.

<sup>62</sup> Agathias, *Historiae*. Preface 21; I, 2–7; II, 25–32; III, 1; IV, 24–30, ed. R. Keydell, CFHB (Berlin, 1967), 7; 11–19; 73–83; 84–85; 153–63.

was published under Justin II, though many of its poems, by various poets, had been written during Justinian's reign.<sup>63</sup> Corippus' *Johannid* deals nominally with the period 546–48, but refers also to the 530s.<sup>64</sup> It was written very soon after 548, but then there is a gap of nearly twenty years till his *In Laudem Justiniani*, written in 566 or 567.<sup>65</sup> Dioscorus of Aphroditos, a lawyer by training who was born about 520, admittedly wrote at least four poems under Justinian, but, again, it was not until the reign of Justin II, when he was presumably at least in his forties, that his literary career prospered.<sup>66</sup> Peter the Patrician, fragments of whose *History* demonstrate his competence in the approved literary language, wrote his report on his diplomatic mission to Persia so colloquially that Menander Protector found it necessary in the late sixth century to translate it into something more Attic. That Peter never refined his account of his mission may have been because he died before he could undertake it rather than because of a reluctance to publish, but we cannot be sure.<sup>67</sup> As to Malalas, the break in his method of work is so extreme that scholars have generally proposed two authors.<sup>68</sup> In our one manuscript Malalas takes fifty-four pages to cover the first six years of Justinian's rule (527–33) and only eighteen to deal with the next thirty years, i.e., he cuts down from about nine pages to a little over half a page per year (a threefold break should perhaps be suggested, since Malalas devotes six pages to the last two years, leaving only twelve pages for the middle twenty-eight). Oddly enough, the arguments for a change of authorship do not draw

attention to this reduction in coverage, but concentrate rather on a supposed shift of interest from Antioch to Constantinople and from monophysitism to orthodoxy. Even granted this likely change of author, Malalas' brevity on the middle and later part of Justinian's reign is very odd, given that most chroniclers become much more loquacious as they reach their own time. The abruptness of the change also rules out an explanation based on the onset of old age (if Malalas is indeed the author of the last section), unless we assume a long break between the writing of the earlier and later sections. That we are dealing with an abbreviated text will not do as an explanation, since later chroniclers such as Theophanes, who would have had access to the full text, are similarly succinct about the period from 535 to 560.<sup>69</sup> Admittedly, our main source for Justinian's reign, Procopius' *Wars*, cannot easily be fitted into this pattern, for his first seven books, covering the period to 550, were published in 550–51. But even here the eighth and last book, published in 553 or 557, is rather more general in scope, covering Italy, Africa, and the East for 550–52.<sup>70</sup> Nor can I be precise about the dating of the bulk of the material in the *Secret History*. Although I have the impression that there is more datable material referring to the early period, the *Secret History* certainly deals quite specifically, also, with the middle and later years of Justinian's reign.

Still, Procopius apart, we do have an odd clash between the dates of publication of our sources and the material they cover. There is probably no simple explanation. But the upheaval within Byzantine society has been brilliantly discussed by Averil Cameron. I cannot here even try to do justice to Professor Cameron's detailed yet wide-ranging argument on how Constantinople, as the center of government, pulled through the crisis of the seventh century.<sup>71</sup> For her, the late sixth century was crucial:

It was a time when the Byzantine emperors in the capital presided over a process of cultural integration

<sup>63</sup> A. D. E. and A. M. Cameron, "The Cycle of Agathias," *JHS*, 86 (1966), 6–25. B. Baldwin's counter-argument, "Four Problems in Agathias," *BZ*, 70 (1977), 295–305, is not convincing. See Averil Cameron, "The Career of Corippus Again," *CQ*, n.s. 30 (1980), 537.

<sup>64</sup> J. Diggle and F. R. D. Goodyear, *Iohannidos Libri VIII* (Cambridge, 1970).

<sup>65</sup> Averil Cameron, ed., *Corippus, In Laudem Iustini Augusti minoris Libri IV* (London, 1976), 1–2.

<sup>66</sup> For detail we must await Dr. L. S. B. MacCoull's forthcoming study of Dioscorus. Dr. MacCoull kindly supplied me with her most recent estimate of the number of Justinianic poems. See her important survey "The Coptic Archive of Dioscorus of Aphroditos," *Chronique d'Égypte*, 56, III (1981), 185–93.

<sup>67</sup> Menander Protector, frag. 12, ed. C. Müller, *FHG*, 4 (Paris, 1851), 217; *Excerpta de Sententiis*, ed. U. P. Boissevain (Berlin, 1906), 19. Cf. H. Hunger, "The Classical Tradition in Byzantine Literature: The Importance of Rhetoric," in M. E. Mullett and R. D. Scott, eds., *Byzantium and the Classical Tradition*, *op. cit.* (*supra*, note 5), 46.

<sup>68</sup> The clearest summary of the Malalas question is still J. B. Bury's review of Krumbacher in *CR*, 11 (1897), 207–13. See also N. Pigulevskaja, "Theophanes' *Chronographia* and the Syrian Chronicles," *JÖBG*, 16 (1967), 58–59. H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, I, 320.

<sup>69</sup> Theophanes devotes a little over 12 pages to the period 527/28 to 533/34, i.e., almost two pages *per annum*. Then he has a long excursus on the Vandal war under the year 534/35 (30 pages) and another 25 pages for the period 535/36 to 564/65 (i.e., under one page *per annum*), despite a further, longish excursus drawn from Procopius and an increasing use of an ecclesiastical source for material not supplied by Malalas. It is clear that Theophanes found it necessary to supplement Malalas as his chief source for the latter part of Justinian's reign.

<sup>70</sup> J. A. S. Evans, *Procopius* (New York, 1972), 41–43; Rubin, *Prokopios von Kaisareia*, 80–81.

<sup>71</sup> A. M. Cameron, *art. cit.* (*supra*, note 5).

by which the elite and its rulers came to be fully identified. In this society such integration could only be expressed in religious terms. So it happened that classical culture for a time quietly took a back seat. Still practised by the elite of Justinian's day, it had even then been dangerously associated with paganism. Such a luxury could no longer be permitted. Imperial historians and poets who had previously striven to keep up "classical" styles of writing now presented their subjects unblushingly within the terms of Old Testament typology; when classical culture came back into fashion, after the years of struggle, it was less a real alternative than a scholarly revival. The sixth-century emperors lent their active patronage to religious developments already under way; they were quick to ally icons with imperial ceremony, and to foster the emergence of the Virgin as the protectress of Constantinople by making her their own protectress too. Their own ceremonial increased in impact and complexity, and set the imperial players in a scenario ever more religious in tone.<sup>72</sup>

The great importance of Cameron's article for my purpose is that she dates this cultural and social fusion to the time of Justin II, and that she emphasizes the initiative taken by the Emperor and his advisers (of whom we might note in passing the two most important are Anastasius, who commissioned Corippus' propaganda poem *In Praise of Justin*, and Patriarch John Scholasticus, who has been the leading contender in attempts at identifying Malalas, albeit on somewhat implausible grounds).<sup>73</sup> It is Cameron's *dating* of this cultural fusion that is important, plus the *initiative* taken by the Emperor. Here Cameron points out that this is the outcome of a long struggle, a struggle which took place under Justinian, and mentions some of Justinian's attempts to christianize ceremonial and to remove its secular, classical aspects.<sup>74</sup> We must think of this in terms of a struggle between the Emperor and his court, the new aristocracy, against the old-fashioned, cultured, classically trained though Christian elite of society, a clash between two groups both of which knew the value of propaganda and had the necessary skills to create and distribute it.

I want to make three suggestions here. First, that the resurgence of publication in the late years of

Justinian and the early years of Justin II reflects the liberalizing of society once the fusion remarked by Cameron had been achieved—not that it can be dated precisely, but rather that there was a gradual regaining of confidence among the writers. What was being published was largely material which, though written earlier, in the years of repression, no one had felt confident to publish. This reluctance to publish might explain the attention to early material in Malalas and Lydus especially, the unpolished state of Peter the Patrician's work, the break in Corippus' career, the delay in publishing Agathias' *Cycle*, and Dioscorus of Aphroditos' late flowering. I am not suggesting that there had been actual censorship of material. The subject matter of these writers was not politically sensitive, and in the case of Malalas might well be considered pro-imperial. Rather, the problem was that to be a writer at all, especially in a classical genre, was to run the risk of being labeled a Helene.

My second suggestion is that Book 18 of Malalas' *Chronographia*, with its odd farrago on the activities of the Emperor, reflects Justinian's desperate efforts to advertise his new style of government and so to help implement it. This, I suggest, was done by means of numerous public notices about his measures and achievements, which Malalas somehow collected and included as a strange hotchpotch of undigested material. (I am not, of course, suggesting that the chronicle itself is propaganda; rather, that it is based on propaganda). Many of Justinian's activities were of course perfectly traditional—but both these and the changes in style met with opposition, and stories reflecting this opposition apparently circulated widely. The *Secret History*, then, reflects opposition; in particular the opposition to Justinian's new style of government. Though it is difficult to pin this down precisely, the most general theme of criticism in the *Secret History* is that Justinian is innovative, meddling with what was old and established, introducing new laws, new customs, and thus challenging the way of life of the Byzantine establishment.<sup>75</sup> It is the victory of this new style of government that Averil Cameron shows to have taken place with the accession of Justin II in 565. But the battle took place under Justinian, and Malalas and the *Secret History* at least describe the weapons for us, even if they evade the real issues.

My third suggestion concerns the oral sources,

<sup>72</sup> *Eadem* (*Past and Present*), 4; (Mullett and Scott), 206.

<sup>73</sup> J. Haury, "Johannes Malalas identisch mit dem Patriarchen Johannes Scholasticus?", *BZ*, 9 (1900), 337–56. H. Hunger, *Die hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, I, 321. Malalas' lack of interest in theology makes the identification improbable, while his precise knowledge of the business of the Comes Orientis in Antioch suggests a position on his staff, as B. Croke has pointed out to me.

<sup>74</sup> A. M. Cameron, *art. cit.* (*Past and Present*), 6–18; (Mullett and Scott), 208–16.

<sup>75</sup> *Secret History*, e.g., viii, 26; xi, 1; xxx, 21–24.

which I raised with the story of Eulalios. If an emperor wanted to spread a rumor by word of mouth, one group stands out as an obvious medium for that purpose—the circus factions—they have access to both the emperor and the court on the one hand and to the crowds on the other. And they play an important role in the new cultural integration. To quote Averil Cameron again: “It is the most natural thing of all that precisely during these years [i.e., the reign of Justin II] that most agonistic feature of Justinianic society—the circus factions—was drawn securely into imperial ceremonial, even imperial ceremonial at its most fully religious.”<sup>76</sup> It is of course virtually impossible to trace the source of a rumor with precision, but two passages at least certainly have some connection with the hippodrome: the action of Narses, during the Nika Riots, in distributing money to the Blue faction to persuade them to chant pro-imperial slogans, and the quarrel and reconciliation between Justin II and his son-in-law, a story (set significantly in the imperial stables) obviously intended for wide circulation.<sup>77</sup>

There remains one last comparison between Malalas and the *Secret History*. Near the beginning of Book 18 Malalas includes one of those odd calculations of dates in which chronographers sometimes indulge:

The total period from the rule of the Augustus Octavian Emperor until the completion of the second consulship of the Emperor Justinian in the seventh indiction was 559 years; i.e., the total period from Adam to the same indiction amounts to 6097 years, which tallies with the number of years found in the computations of Clement, Theophilus, and Timotheus, whose chronographies are in accord. In the years of Eusebius, the pupil of Pamphilus, I found the number of years from Adam till Justinian's consulship of the seventh indiction to work out as 6032. Those who follow Theophilus and Timotheus have set out their chronographies much more accurately. Yet, there is complete agreement that the sixth millennium of the world has passed.<sup>78</sup>

<sup>76</sup> A. M. Cameron, *art. cit.* (*Past and Present*), 5; (Mullett and Scott), 206.

<sup>77</sup> Malalas, 476, 3–7 (Narses bribing the Blues); Theophanes, AM 6065, *op. cit.*, 246, 11–26 (Badouarios, wrongly described by Theophanes as Justin's brother; cf. A. M. Cameron, “The Empress Sophia,” *Byzantion*, 45 [1975], 10). P. Karlin-Hayter in her work on Michael III also suggests the hippodrome as the place where the Emperor's *agents provocateurs* deliberately spread their gossip and propaganda.

<sup>78</sup> Malalas, 428, 8–19. The text here is in some doubt. Dindorf gives the figures 6497 and 6432. In the first case, the additional 400 is certainly in a second hand, as J. B. Bury pointed out, “The Text of the Codex Baroccianus,” *BZ*, 6 (1897), 221. Here the original scribe, presumably expecting a figure in the

It is this last sentence which is the key. The Byzantines, we must recall, believed that the world was created exactly 5,500 years before Christ.<sup>79</sup> They also had their fundamentalist streak. If, as Malalas himself reminds us, a thousand years is but a day in the eyes of the Lord, then Christ was born halfway through the sixth day.<sup>80</sup> Did that give mankind a divine half-day (500 years in human terms) to repent before the Lord rested at the end of the sixth day? Or would that be the Day of Judgment or the Second Coming which Malalas appears to have expected.<sup>81</sup> I am not sure whether it is with a certain sense of relief or of disappointment that Malalas can assure his audience that the sixth millennium had definitely passed. Eschatological literature allows for various interpretations, notably

hundreds column, left a gap. In the second case, it is unclear whether the upsilon (400) is original or not as it has at least been touched up by a second hand and may have been created out of the original scribe's flourish on the end of the digamma (6000). That is, the second hand, having noticed the gap in the first figure, may have filled it from the simplest paleographic change to the second figure, in which case the 400 carries no authority other than of paleographic neatness. The omission of the 400 has the support of the Slavonic version, M. Spinka and G. Downey, *The Chronicle of John Malalas, Books 8–18, Translated from the Church Slavonic* (Chicago, 1940), 135–36. Inclusion of the 400 not only makes nonsense of Malalas' interest in whether or not the sixth millennium had been completed, but conflicts with standard Byzantine calculations of the years since Creation, including those of the three survivors of Malalas' named sources here, Theophilus, *Ad Autolyicum*, III.28, ed. and trans. R. M. Grant (Oxford, 1970), 142–44; Clement, *Stromateis*, I.147, PG, 8, col. 880 B-C; Eusebius, *Chronicon*, Preface, ed. R. Helm (GCS, Berlin, 1956), 14–18, though neither Clement nor Eusebius provide sufficient information for us to be certain about their conclusions. The inclusion of the 400 would also seem to conflict with Malalas' own calculations in Book 10. Cf. Malalas, 227–29, especially 227.10–228.8. Unfortunately, the text of Malalas' calculations in Book 10 is in dispute. H. Gelzer, *Sextus Julius Africanus und die byzantinische Chronographie*, II (Leipzig, 1885), 130–32, drawing on arguments first made by Hody in 1691, argued that Malalas dated the birth of Christ to *anno mundi* 5970 (and the Crucifixion to 6000), not 5500. Gelzer's suggestions were adopted by A. Schenk von Stauffenberg, *Die römische Kaisergeschichte bei Malalas* (Stuttgart, 1931), 11. A full discussion is out of place here. It is clear that two distinct systems of chronology survive in the Baroccianus manuscript, but whether the confusion goes back to Malalas or was introduced later in the tradition (for instance, by the epitomator) is unclear. Gelzer's arguments, though persuasive, require too many changes to be convincing and also place Malalas at odds with both his own sources and with the general Byzantine tradition. But even if Gelzer's emendations for the numerals in Book 10 are accepted, they still will not tally with Dindorf's figures in Book 18. The problem is slippery, but for the present it seems safer to accept the manuscript figures in Book 10 and the first scribe's figures in Book 18.

<sup>79</sup> Cf. C. Mango, *Byzantium, the New Rome* (London, 1980), 191–92; O. P. Nicholson, *Lactantius in Prophecy and Politics in the Age of Constantine the Great* (unpub. D.Phil. thesis [Oxford, 1981]), 147–68.

<sup>80</sup> Malalas, 228, 15–17. Cf. Psalm 90:4; II Peter 3:8.

<sup>81</sup> Malalas, 228, 21–229, 12.

a period of troubles, usually of three and a half years, but sometimes longer, caused by the Antichrist, followed by a thousand years of peace and happiness. However, given the prevalence of this kind of thinking (and it was widespread),<sup>82</sup> what an opportunity it provided for Justinian to promote his reign (possibly entirely sincerely), if not quite as the Second Coming, then at least as the moment of rebirth and renewal. And that, as we know, is exactly what the Emperor did with enormous energy and vigor in the early part of his reign, whether in regaining the lost western part of the Empire, in recodifying the laws, in rebuilding the cities, or, above all, in reeducating his people to live a proper Christian life.

Or so Justinian would have us believe, at least up to the mid 530s, and we get a glimpse of this in the pages of Malalas. But there was another way of looking at the period and at the end of the sixth millennium, especially from the vantage point of the latter part of his reign. In the course of the reign the good old ways were abandoned, the established laws changed, the administrative system upset, the important cities of Syria, including Great Antioch—Theoupolis, *the City of God*, as it had just been renamed by Justinian—were invaded and captured by the Persians, and there were long, expensive wars in Africa and Italy, which left both those countries desolate; riots and the plague killed tens, perhaps hundreds, of thousands of innocent citizens, and earthquakes, sent by God, destroyed many a fine city. God works in mysterious ways. Perhaps the millennium marked not the moment of rebirth, but the arrival for us sinners of the Antichrist, the Demon King.<sup>83</sup>

<sup>82</sup> C. Mango, *op. cit.*, 201–5; O. P. Nicholson, *op. cit.*, 220–21, 339–70. G. Podskalsky, *Byzantinische Reicheschatologie* (Munich, 1972), *passim* (but his treatment of Malalas is weak, *op. cit.*, 72). P. J. Alexander, “Historiens byzantins et croyances eschatologiques,” *Actes du xii<sup>e</sup> Congrès International d’Etudes Byzantines, Ochride 10–16 Septembre 1961* (Belgrade, 1964), vol. 2, 1–8; A. A. Vasiliev, “Medieval Ideas of the End of the World: West and East,” *Byzantion*, 16 (1942–43), 462–502; W. Bousset, *The Antichrist Legend* (London, 1896). Both von Stauffenberg, *op. cit.*, 215–16, and Rubin, *Das Zeitalter Justinians*, 452, express surprise at the absence of any reference to the Antichrist or the millennium in Malalas.

<sup>83</sup> For a contemporary description of the Antichrist appearing in the guise of a tyrant (or emperor?) who will deceitfully pretend to be Christ, build a church, perform false miracles, and then spread terror, cause earthquakes, death, affliction, exile, etc., see Romanos, Kontakion 34, “On the Second Coming,” ed. P. Maas and C. A. Trypanis, *Sancti Romani Melodi Cantica, Cantica Genuina* (Oxford, 1963), 266–75. This makes it easier to understand how any suggestion that Justinian was preparing for the Second Coming could easily be turned against him later,

Such, then, were the calamities which fell upon all mankind during the reign of the *demon* who had become *incarnate in Justinian*, while he himself, as having become Emperor, provided the causes of them. And I shall show further how many evils he did to men by means of a *hidden power* and of a *demoniacal* nature. For while this man was administering the nation’s affairs, many other calamities chanced to befall, which some insisted came about through the aforementioned presence of this *evil demon* and through his contriving, while others said that the Deity, detesting his works, turned away from the Roman Empire and gave place to the *abominable demons* for the bringing of these things to pass in this fashion.<sup>84</sup>

Procopius, for all his sophisticated classical veneer, was as superstitious as any sixth-century Christian (there is evidence enough of that even in his respectable works);<sup>85</sup> so if he had it on the incontrovertible evidence of a Holy Man that Justinian was the Prince of Demons, then as a reputable historian (which indeed Procopius was) he must take notice.<sup>86</sup> He had also heard, admittedly indirectly, that at meetings of the council Justinian’s head became separated from his body, which wandered headless round the room.<sup>87</sup> This was the report of Justinian’s own counselors, grave men whose observations were not to be taken lightly, and there were many more such reports, if not always based on sources which a historian likes to use without corroborative evidence. Procopius, however, may well have felt that the evidence was clear enough. His *Secret History* is a serious work by a serious historian. When asked to write *The Buildings*—a panegyric for the Emperor—he could hardly refuse, but, with the advantage of hindsight, was it not all

when his early successes turned sour. Agathias, *Historiae*, 5.5.2, ed. R. Keydell, CFHB (Berlin, 1967), 169, records that some believed that the end of the world was at hand in December 557.

<sup>84</sup> *Secret History*, xviii, 36–37. Cf. xii, 14, 27; xviii, 1–4; xxx, 34, which is Procopius’ final paragraph. Rubin has pointed out the *Secret History*’s identification of Justinian as the Antichrist on several occasions, but did not associate this with the millennium, although that is an integral part of Antichrist literature. Rubin, “Der Fürst der Dämonen,” 469–81; *idem*, *Das Zeitalter Justinians*, 441–54; *idem*, “Der Antichrist und die Apokalypse des Prokopios von Kaisareia,” *ZDMG*, 110 (1961), 55–63.

<sup>85</sup> Cf. Procopius, *Persian Wars*, I.7.5–11; II.11.14–23; II.13.13–15; 20–22; *op. cit.*, I. 31–32, 200–201, 210–11, 238. For a full treatment we await Averil Cameron’s forthcoming book on Procopius. In the meantime note her “The ‘Scepticism’ of Procopius,” *Historia*, 15 (1966), 466–82; *eadem*, “The Sceptic and the Shroud,” *Inaugural Lecture at Kings College, London, April, 1980* (London, 1980), both reprinted in *eadem*, *Continuity and Change in Sixth-Century Byzantium* (London, 1981).

<sup>86</sup> *Secret History*, xii, 24.

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, xii, 20–23; cf. K. Gantar, “Kaisar Justinian als kopfloser Dämon,” *BZ*, 54 (1961), 1–3.

the more incumbent on him to write a reassessment of his interpretation of the millennium? I have shown above that many of the topics raised by Malalas and the *Secret History* correspond to each other. I ask now whether the two differ mainly on the question of whether Justinian was God's representative, preparing the way for the Second Coming, or the Prince of Demons sent to chastise us? Fur-

ther, is it not just possible that the arrival of the millennium had its effect too on an equally superstitious Justinian and, in consequence, really did affect the course of history?

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